

# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DECEMBER 11, 2003**

## **THE NCLEX-RN<sup>®</sup> Examination Passing Standard Revised for Public Safety**

**Chicago, IL.** The National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. (NCSBN) voted at its December 2-4, 2003 meeting to raise the passing standard for the NCLEX-RN<sup>®</sup> examination, the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses. The new passing standard is -0.2800 logits on the NCLEX-RN logistic scale, 0.070 logits higher than the previous standard of -0.3500. The new passing standard will take effect on April 1, 2004, in conjunction with the new 2004 NCLEX-RN Test Plan.

NCSBN increased the passing standard in response to changes in U.S. health care delivery and nursing practice that have resulted in the increased acuity of clients seen by entry-level RNs. After considering all available information, the Board of Directors determined that safe and effective entry-level RN practice requires a greater level of knowledge, skills, and abilities than was required in 1998, when NCSBN established the current standard.

The NCSBN Board of Directors used multiple sources of information to guide its evaluation and discussion regarding the change in passing standard. As part of this process, NCSBN convened an expert panel of nine nurses to perform a criterion-referenced standard setting procedure. The panel's findings supported the creation of a higher passing standard. NCSBN also considered the results of a national survey of nursing professionals including nursing educators, directors of nursing in acute care settings, and administrators of long-term care facilities.

In accordance with a motion adopted by the 1989 Delegate Assembly of the NCSBN, the NCSBN Board of Directors evaluates the passing standard for the NCLEX-RN examination every three years to protect the public by ensuring minimal competence for entry-level RNs. NCSBN coordinates the passing standard analysis with the three-year cycle of test plan content evaluation, conducted using a practice analysis of entry-level RNs. This three-year cycle was developed to keep the test content and passing standard current with entry-level practice. The 2004 NCLEX-RN Test Plan is available now free of charge electronically for download or in hard copy for purchase via the NCSBN web site.

General information regarding NCSBN and the NCLEX examination program is at: <http://www.ncsbn.org/>.

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*Vision: Building regulatory expertise worldwide.*